

Reverend Timothy Walker House  
276 North Main Street  
Concord  
Merrimack County  
New Hampshire

HABS No. NH-166

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

REVEREND TIMOTHY WALKER HOUSE

HABS No. NH-166

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Location: 276 North Main Street, Concord, Merrimack County, New Hampshire. (Original Township Map: Lot No. 2)

Present Owner: Edgar F. & Josephine Walker Woodman, 276 North Main Street, Concord, N.H.

Present Occupant: Same.

Present Use: Private Residence.

Significance: The old (1733-74) portion of the house is representative of the typical New England minister's house in the 2nd quarter of the 18th century. It was enlarged toward the end of the century and again enlarged and thoroughly Victorianized in the middle of the 19th century by the grandson of the Rev. Timothy Walker, who also built the adjacent Joseph Walker Cottage (HABS No. NH-163). Finally, to bring the pendulum full swing, the old house, in this century has had its facade restored to more or less its original aspect.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1731 | Rev. T. Walker bought 1 1/2 acres land from Henry Rolfe in Penicook (Concord) Essex Co. [Deed at Exeter, 109/234]. Built primitive abode which was used till superceded in 1733-35 with present house. |
| 1733 | Town voted to give L 50 to Rev. Walker for building him a house in Pennycook (sic); [Concord Town Records, 1732-1820] (Printed volume), Concord, N.H., 1894, p. 15.                                    |
| 1769 | One half of the farm conveyed by Rev. T. Walker to his son Judge Timothy Walker ["Abstract of title of Joseph B. Walker Farm", MS in possession of Mrs. Josephine Walker Woodman].                     |
| 1782 | Other half of Walker farm devised to Judge Timothy Walker (ibid).  |

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- 1803 Judge Timothy Walker conveyed one half the farm to his youngest son Captain Joseph Walker (ibid).
- 1807 Other half of Walker farm devised to Captain Joseph Walker (ibid).
- 1833 Capt. Joseph Walker died intestate and the farm descended by law to his only son and heir Joseph B. Walker (ibid), (1822-1913). The farm then passed from J. B. Walker to his son Joseph Timothy Walker, and from J. T. Walker to his daughter Josephine (Walker) Woodman, the present owner.
2. Date of Erection: 1733-34; interior of front part finished 1757; interior completely finished 1764. (Information from various primary and secondary sources. See Item A. 7. - Sources of Information).
3. Architect: Unknown. Builder: Deacon Webster of Bradford, Mass., is said to have done joinery on interior of front part of house in 1757; made the stairway and panelled upper and lower halls in 1764. /J. B. Walker, House and Farm...; In the account book of Timothy Walker, owned by Mrs Woodman, there is no mention of Deacon Webster nor indeed of the house at all. Boards and timbers came from sawmill at east Concord, erected 1728/29.
4. Original plans, construction, etc: None known. In 1757 it was undecided as to whether or not to paint the outside of the house /Ltn Rev. T. Walker to his son, dtd 9 Sept 1757, Walker Papers, Vol I, p. 5, NHHS Conclusion then reached is not known; about 1836 it wore a coat of light yellow paint upon its walls, white on cornices, corner boards and casings. These remained unchanged until 1848. /J. B. Walker, House and Farm..., p. 57.
5. Notes on Alterations and Additions: First major enlargement was doubling length and height of ell by Judge Timothy, c. 1790-1800. Porch added to South side of main house, c. 1833-40(?). Second major alteration and enlargement in 1848; front door frame removed and a porch built over it, dormer windows added to front and ell, chimnies possibly panelled in brick at this time. Third enlargement c. 1870 of bay window pavilion to South side of library with mansard roof. Barn built prior to 1860. Most recent change in front elevation restored to original aspect; old front door found and rehung. /J. B. Walker, House and Farm...

6. Important old views: Grace P. Amsden, A Capitol for New Hampshire, Typescript MS, 1950, unique copy in NHHS. Ch 6, p. 10 gives two views of house in "original state". Ch 8, p. 4 gives sketch of garrison of 1739-46. Ch 9, p. 4 gives photo of house c. 1900.
  7. Sources of information: Grace P. Amsden, A Capitol for New Hampshire, Typescript MS, 1950, Unique copy in NHHS Library. Joseph B. Walker, The House and Farm of the First Minsiter of Concord, N. H., 1726-1906, Concord, 1906. Joseph B. Walker, Life and Genealogy of Rev. Timothy Walker, Concord, 1902. Walker Family Papers, collection of MSs, NHHS. Also Walker papers in possession of Mrs. E. F. Woodman. Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. E. F. Woodman.
- B. Historical Events Connected with Structure: During his long life of civic and pastoral activity (1734-82), the ministers house was the spiritual and intellectual center of the town. Here were entertained Gen. John Stark, Major Robert Rogers of the Rangers, Gov. John Langdon and many others.

Prepared by: Charles B. Wood, III  
New Hampshire  
Historical Society  
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PART II ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Important as the architecturally imposing house of the first minister in Concord. Important for its early use of academic detail in this provincial location and for its fine gambrel roof. Great interest also in the continual series of changes wrought by each succeeding generation which occupied the house; very little is left in original condition in the interior of the oldest portion. Great sentimental value and historic import attached to this building locally.
2. Condition of Fabric: Good, well maintained.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Original dimensions of earliest part of house: 40 feet wide by 20 feet deep, ell 20 feet square.
2. Foundations: Granite masonry. Entire house and foundations raised up about one foot c. 1848.
3. Wall construction: Heavy timber frame, vertical studs, horizontal wall boarding and clapboard exterior sheathing. Clapboards modern.
4. Porches: Simple porch on North side where ell and woodshed meet. More elaborate porch with Greek Doric columns on the South side of main house, dates c. 1833-40 (?).
5. Chimneys: Have been much altered. Stack on N end of main house has been restored to roughly original appearance (simple brick). Chimneys on S end of main house and ell are decorated with elaborately panelled brick facings c. 1880-90.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Main west entrance frontispiece is said to be original; it was removed in 1848 and not restored until this century. Fluted Roman Doric pilasters flank original 9-panel door; there are no pedestals, no entablature. Making cornice caps design, but does not contain horizontal cornice (although it does contain keystone). Transom light of five square panes over door. Simple six panel door on south side entrance.

- b. Windows and shutters: double hung wood sash; heavy projecting exterior trim with triangular pediments on ground story front wall of main house; (cornice over second-story front windows). Interior shutters in N parlor, ground floor only. Carpenter's gothic frames on barn windows, c. 1850.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Gambrel, rear lower pitch has been altered to join more easily with ell roof. Birch bark sheathing visible between roofers in attic. Exterior entirely covered with modern asphalt shingles.
- b. Framing: Visible in attic. Principle rafters are of one piece for the two upper pitches (i.e. cruck beams) and there is no ridge pole. Joinery of high quality.
- c. Cornice, eaves: Simple moulded cornice across W front.
- d. Dormers: There were formerly two dormers on the W front roof (built c. 1848, removed, 19? ). There are now two dormers over S ell roof. Mansard type roof over bay window pavillion (S side of ell) has inset window with semicircular arched head.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

- 1. Floor plans: Main portion - two stories and unfinished attic; center stair hall, one main room each side, north chimney in center of roof ridge, south chimney at rear eave. Interiors much altered. Ell - two stories and semi-finished attic; four rooms to each floor with a cramped staircase inserted between; all very much added to and altered. Rear of ell is woodshed which connects to barn.
- 2. Stairways: Front stair in central hall is replacement; federal-Adamesque in style but built c. 1848. Sweeping spiral layout, dowel balusters, mahogany rail, plastered and moulded soffit follows form of stair. Cantilever construction. Cramped straight run of stairs in ell.
- 3. Random width painted pine boards in south parlor and library; all other floors are modern hardwood.  
Flooring:

4. Wall and ceiling finish: All rooms have modern plaster walls and ceilings; none are wall papered. None have chair rail or dado. All ceilings on ground floor raised 18" about 1848.
5. Doorways and doors: All doors in main house and ell are replacements of 1848 or later; all six paneled. A few 18th century doors are re-used in woodshed.
6. Trim: Cornices in main house not original. Croisseted frames around interior window and door openings in North parlor, interior shutters in window embrasures in N parlor only. In S parlor there are no embrasures or shutters; the exterior wall is thinner. In this room there are projecting cornices over window frames. This room was probably originally the same as the N parlor but was changed in 1848. Notable and original carved corner cupboard in dining room (shows original ceiling height).
7. Hardware: almost all Victorian replacements. A few original thumb latches.
8. Lighting: Modern electric fixtures.
9. Heating: All fireplace surrounds (black marble, white marble and wood) are of the 1840-50 period. A cord wood furnace for forced hot air put in c. 1840-50. A coal furnace for steam radiators put in c. 1860. An oil furnace for steam radiators put in 1950.

#### D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: On East side of N. Main Street, in its own separate "neighborhood". Occupies the same upon which originally built. Main front faces toward the West, about 20 feet from the street.
2. Enclosures: There formerly was a wooden fence and hedge along front inside of side walk.
3. Outbuildings: Woodshed and barn connect with rear of ell. Woodshed framed with old timbers.
4. Walks: Modern - plank, black-top.
5. Landscaping: Simple, not original.

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